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GOV. MALLOY SIGNS LAW CRIMINALIZING FALSE CLAIMS OF MILITARY VALOR FOR PROFIT

(HARTFORD, CT) – Governor Dannel P. Malloy on Friday morning announced that he has signed legislation clarifying that it is illegal for a person to falsely represent themselves as being the recipient of a medal or decoration for military service when it is done with the intent to fraudulently obtain money, property, goods or services.

"Misrepresenting oneself as having served in our military for your own profit is not only disrespectful, but selfish and cannot be tolerated," said Governor Malloy. "Serving in our military is an incredibly honorable act. Especially as our country prepares to observe Memorial Day this weekend, we should take this opportunity to reflect on the generations of men and women who have fought to make our nation a better, stronger place."

The crime remains punishable by up to six months in jail, a fine between \$500 and \$1,000, or both.

"Our military men and women and their families have made tremendous sacrifices for us. It is important that we take every opportunity to assist our veterans in all the ways we can," said Lt. Governor Nancy Wyman. "Ensuring housing, healthcare, and job training are a big part of protecting our veterans, but this legislation makes it clear we will also defend the very titles they have fought so hard to earn."

State Senator Carlo Leone (D-Stamford), co-chair of the Veterans' Affairs Committee, said, "Our veterans make great sacrifices to protect our freedoms, and we recognize their service by bestowing them with medals, ribbons and other honors. To wear one of these symbols is a great point of pride, and to wear one without having earned it — particularly for fraudulent purposes — is fundamentally disrespectful to our country and all those who have served. This tightening of our laws will help to discourage that kind of fraud, and if it occurs again, ensure it is appropriately punished."

"When I was an active member in the military, I was prepared to go into a combat zone to give up my life to defend our nation's freedoms — that was an oath taken very seriously," said State Representative Jack Hennessy (D-Bridgeport), co-chair of the Veterans' Affairs Committee. "People that walk around pretending to be in the military, or pretending to have served, disrespect those who have actually served and those that have made the ultimate sacrifice."

"The brave men and women who sacrifice and serve their country honorably should not be diminished by the callous act of those who pretend to be soldiers. It is about time we say it

is dishonest to misrepresent who you are by wearing a military uniform or fake medals for personal gain," said State Senator Jason Welch (R-Bristol), ranking member of the Veterans' Affairs Committee. "Stolen valor is sadly a real crime. Anyone who would disrespect those who are bravely fighting for their country should be held accountable for their actions."

"The passage of this bill is an essential factor to protecting the men and women who defend our nation and freedom," said State Representative Dave Yaccarino (R-North Haven), ranking member of the Veterans' Affairs Committee. "It's truly unfortunate that such a bill is needed. However, those falsely assuming the awards, decorations, and uniforms we reserve for the highest form of patriotic service deserve nothing less than to be treated as criminals. Stealing military valor is simply disrespectful to the men and women in our military."

The legislation is [Public Act 14-56](#), *An Act Concerning Stolen Valor, Veterans' Service Officers and Technical Corrections to the Definition of Veteran*.

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Contact: David Bednarz

David.Bednarz@ct.gov

860-524-7315 (office)

860-770-9792 (cell)

Twitter: [@GovMalloyOffice](#)

Facebook: [Office of Governor Dannel P. Malloy](#)